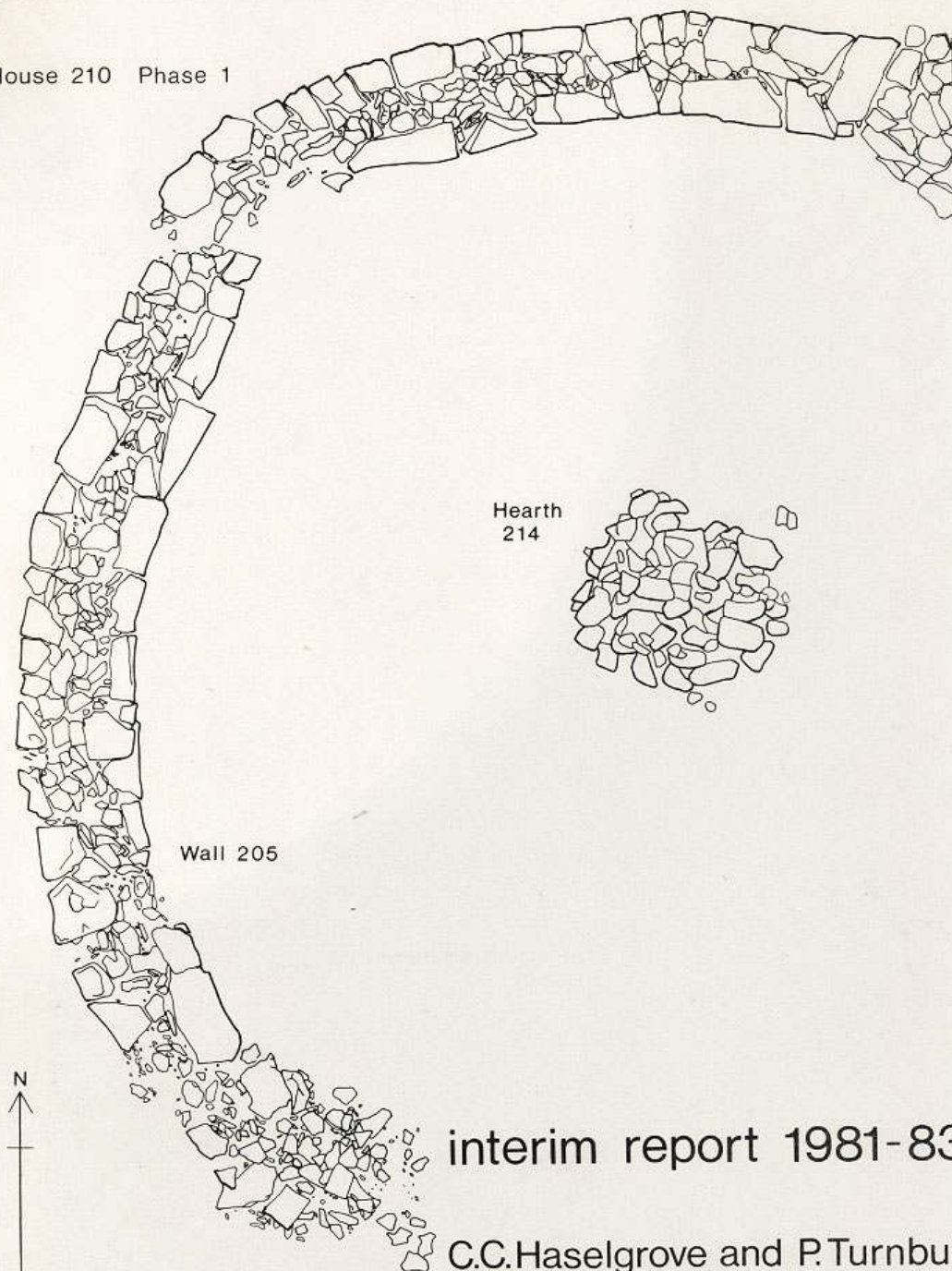


STANWICK: excavation and fieldwork

House 210 Phase 1



interim report 1981-83

C.C.Haselgrove and P.Turnbull

STANWICK : EXCAVATION AND RESEARCH
INTERIM REPORT 1981-3

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INTRODUCTION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND INTERPRETATION AT STANWICK

The earthwork complex known as Stanwick Camp dominates not only the lower Tees valley, but also the late Iron Age archaeology of north-eastern England. The original social and economic importance of this great site is indicated by its very size - some three hundred hectares of gently undulating arable and pasture land are enclosed by ramparts which still survive to a height of several metres.

The central position of Stanwick in the Iron Age of the north has not hitherto been generally acknowledged. Indeed, it has attracted surprisingly little active interest from antiquary or archaeologist: identified by Leland as "a campe of men of warre" or as "ruines of sum old towne" it was accurately surveyed by MacLauchlan (1849) but escaped exploration by the spade until 1951 when R.E.M. Wheeler (Wheeler, 1954) began a two-year campaign of excavations. Wheeler's investigations were concerned mainly with the major earthwork ramparts and ditches, and included only one small area excavation within the defences. He associated the site with the historical personality of Venutius, estranged consort of the Romanophile queen Cartimandua. Three main earthwork phases were identified, of which Phase I, a seven-hectare 'hillfort' in the Tofts, was related to the original split in the Brigantian royal household in the 50's A.D.; Phase II, a much larger enclosure north of Phase I and involving the partial demolition of the earlier rampart, was associated with local unrest in the 60's, attested by Tacitus; while the enormous southward enlargement of Phase III was seen as a military response to the Roman advance under Petillius Cerealis, in 71 A.D., which overwhelmed the site. The interpretation assumes that the earthworks were erected primarily for defensive purposes, by a structurally simple and economically unsophisticated society.

Although this interpretation of Stanwick has been accepted by most authorities, some basic elements of Wheeler's scheme have been questioned: the chronological priority of Phase II over Phase III has been dismissed by Dobson (1970) and by Chadburn (1982 and this volume) and the absolute dating of some of Wheeler's finds pushed back into the 40's A.D. by Hartley and Fitts (1977). The net result of these reassessments was to weaken the bonds with which the archaeological sequence was tied to historical events. From this and from the greatly expanded horizons of prehistoric studies in the decades since Wheeler's work, it became evident that a thorough reappraisal of Stanwick was needed.

The present programme of work at Stanwick includes both excavation and survey. A new study of the earthworks has been undertaken by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, and includes preliminary geophysical exploration in the Tofts area: this has provided valuable insights into the nature and phasing of the earthworks as well as geophysical evidence for extensive and complex settlement activity. A campaign of excavation was begun by Percival Turnbull in 1981, initially on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council and subsequently, with Colin Haselgrove, as part of a Stanwick Archaeological Project based at the

University of Durham and conceived within the framework of the Durham Archaeological Survey (Haselgrove, 1981). Other work under the auspices of the project includes survey at Forcett carried out, originally as an undergraduate dissertation, by Amanda Chadburn.

The picture of Stanwick which emerges, not just from intensive study of the site itself but from a consideration of the late prehistoric landscape of the north-east as a whole, is of a major economic and social centre, broadly analagous to the oppida of south-eastern Britain. The origins of the site remain obscure, though some of the recent work reported in this volume has raised the possibility of a pre-defences phase. The development of the vast earthwork complex in the first century A.D. was probably the near-culmination of a long period in the development, in social, economic and cultural terms, of the indigenous community. The immediate stimulus, suggested by the dating of the main earthwork activity and by the abundance of imported goods, may well have been the fundamental changes in economic and political circumstances occasioned by the proximity of the expanding Roman province.

As explained in the concluding section of this publication, at least four further years of work are envisaged as part of the current research programme. As this will necessitate a delay in the appearance of reports on individual pieces of work until the Final Report on the Project has been assembled, it has been decided to collate this series of short reports on the studies undertaken to date, as a guide to the more detailed information in the archive. This is housed in the Department of Archaeology, University of Durham, together with the recent finds, and may be consulted by prior arrangement. The location of the areas which have been examined is indicated in Figure 1.

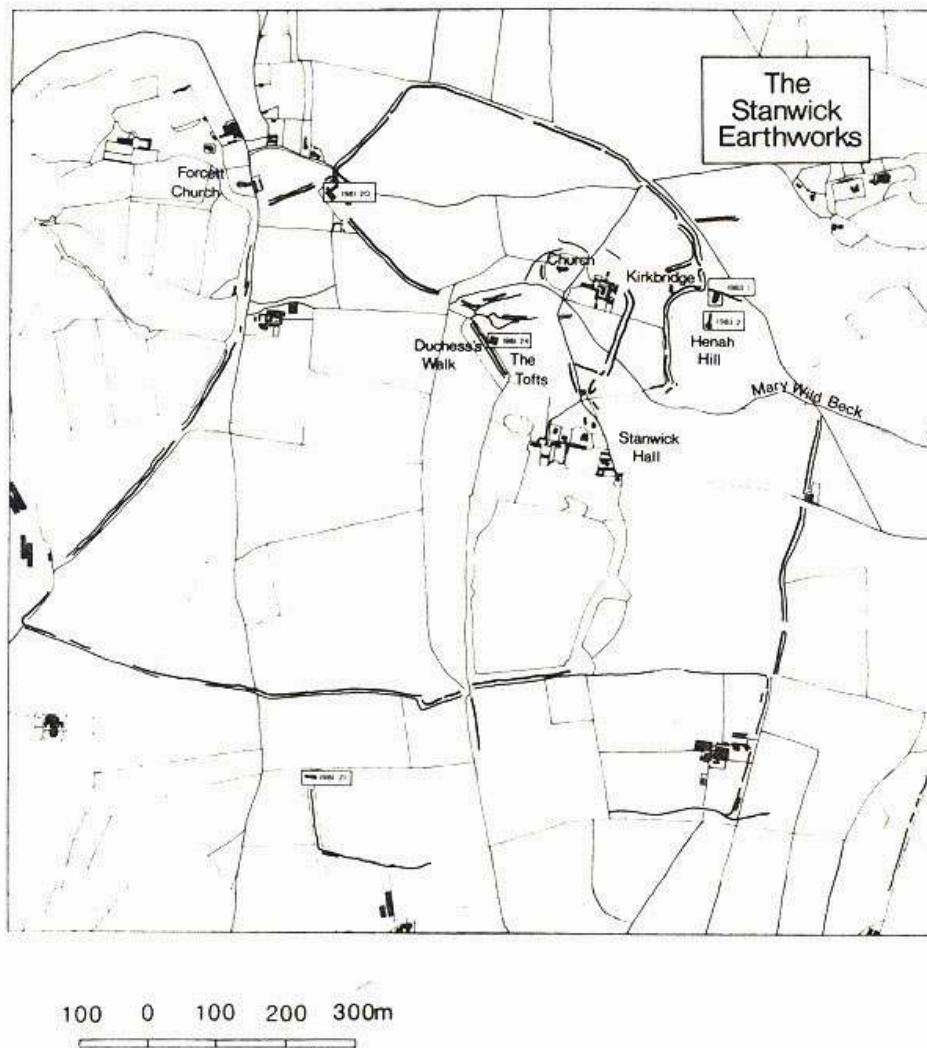


Fig. 1 The Stanwick Earthworks, showing location of areas excavated 1981 - 3.

EXCAVATIONS AT STANWICK, 1981

INTERIM SUMMARY

Percival Turnbull

In July, 1981, a season of excavations at Stanwick was undertaken by this writer for the North Yorkshire County Council and the Department of the Environment, with the principal aim of providing information needed by the D.o.E. for a review of their policy regarding protection and management of a site which is subject to frequent piecemeal erosion and disturbance. Despite the enormous scale of Stanwick and its evident importance to an understanding of the North during the late prehistoric and early Romano-British period, this was the first excavation of Iron Age Stanwick since the work of R.E.M. Wheeler in the early 1950's (Wheeler, 1954).

During the 1981 season, work was carried out in three areas.

Area 1981 - 20

Immediately to the south of the western junction of Wheeler's Phases II and III, on the edge of Forcett village, a total of around 700 square metres was stripped by back-acting machine and cleaned manually in order to search for possible features connected with a suspected entrance leading through the gap between the Phase II and III earthworks and through the known Phase II north-west entrance (Wheeler's Site B). Cleaning down to the natural boulder clay failed however to reveal any Iron Age features, though the area was examined under a wide range of climatic and lighting conditions, and after considerable exposure to weathering. Abundant modern field-drains, several earlier stone-built culverts, and the remains of rigg and furrow could all be discerned: the only structure to be recovered, a setting of four cobble post-pads, may well represent no more than a relatively modern stack-stand.

To determine the extent of surviving Iron Age deposits, a partial section was cut through the Phase II ditch, up to the dry-stone revetment wall of the rampart, and also across a low swelling on the outer lip of the ditch, suggestive of a counterscarp bank. Deposits in the ditch proved to be wet; after rain, the water table reached to within a metre of the present ground surface, a reminder of the high potential of the lower ditch fills in this part of the site for anaerobic preservation of deposits. The upper two metres of ditch, however, showed evidence of repeated disturbance in mediaeval and modern times for drainage and for the insertion of several stone culverts along the line of the ditch. The apparent counterscarp bank proved to consist of a regular, firm surface of small cobbles lying directly under the ploughsoil at a depth of as little as 10 cm. There was no dateable material below the cobbles, which lay directly on the natural clay and which were cut by a stone-lined culvert which debouched into the ditch. There is no reason to suppose that either culvert or cobbles are any earlier than the Middle Ages.

Despite the high degree of mediaeval or later disturbance in this ditch section (a state of affairs which appears to obtain in many of the 1951-2 sections) it is known that Iron Age deposits under waterlogged conditions exist at a somewhat lower level at

Wheeler's Site B, a short distance from the 1981 section; on this occasion, early deposits were not excavated.

Area 1981 - 21

A section was cut across the northern end of the Phase IV bank and ditch in Cat Wood: this was considered by Wheeler to be of post-Roman date, and to have continued northwards along the line of the parish boundary (which follows the earthwork) to join Phase III. The earthwork is at best very slight. The trench failed to reveal any ancient feature; cleaning to the natural clay revealed only a series of post-mediaeval drainage ditches. Despite considerable modern activity, culminating apparently in the levelling of the ground with a bulldozer, there was no trace at all of any ditch or bank. A possible explanation is that the Phase IV earthwork never did continue northwards to Phase III, but that a gap always existed on this western side. Alternatively, and perhaps a more likely explanation, the Phase IV earthwork never did exist as a coherent and discrete phase of activity. The line coincides with the parish boundary at a point where the ground is, even today, particularly ill-drained. It seems that, rather than the earthwork following the boundary, the boggy land along the parish line has for long been left as an uncultivated strip along which drainage channels were routed and which had taken on, by Macclachlan's (1849) time, the appearance of an ancient work. There is certainly nothing to suggest an early date for the apparent earthwork other than its basic association with the main Stanwick earthworks: the earliest phase of the excavated field-ditches produced modern finds.

The whole question of the earthworks along the southern side of Stanwick, and of their relationships to Scots Dyke, is clearly one which should be reconsidered in detail: it is likely that Phase IV should now be discounted.

Area 1981 - 24

The major work of the 1981 season took place in the north-western corner of the Tofts field, within Wheeler's Phase I, but immediately without his Phase II rampart. A 20 metre square was excavated entirely by hand (though not all was taken down to the natural boulder clay) as a validation exercise for the geophysical survey previously conducted in this area by the D.O.E. Ancient Monuments Laboratory; this had shown that features suggesting intensive prehistoric settlement, continuous with the insubstantial remains found by Wheeler in his Site F, lie all over the field to the south of the Phase II earthwork and probably extend well beyond the limits of the surveyed area.

The results of this excavation were of considerable interest and importance, and contrast with the slight remains recovered at Site F. Three main periods of activity were represented in the area examined.

Period 1

This was represented by a series of ditches and pits in the north-eastern part of the area, the only part excavated down to the natural boulder clay. The curvature of the admittedly short

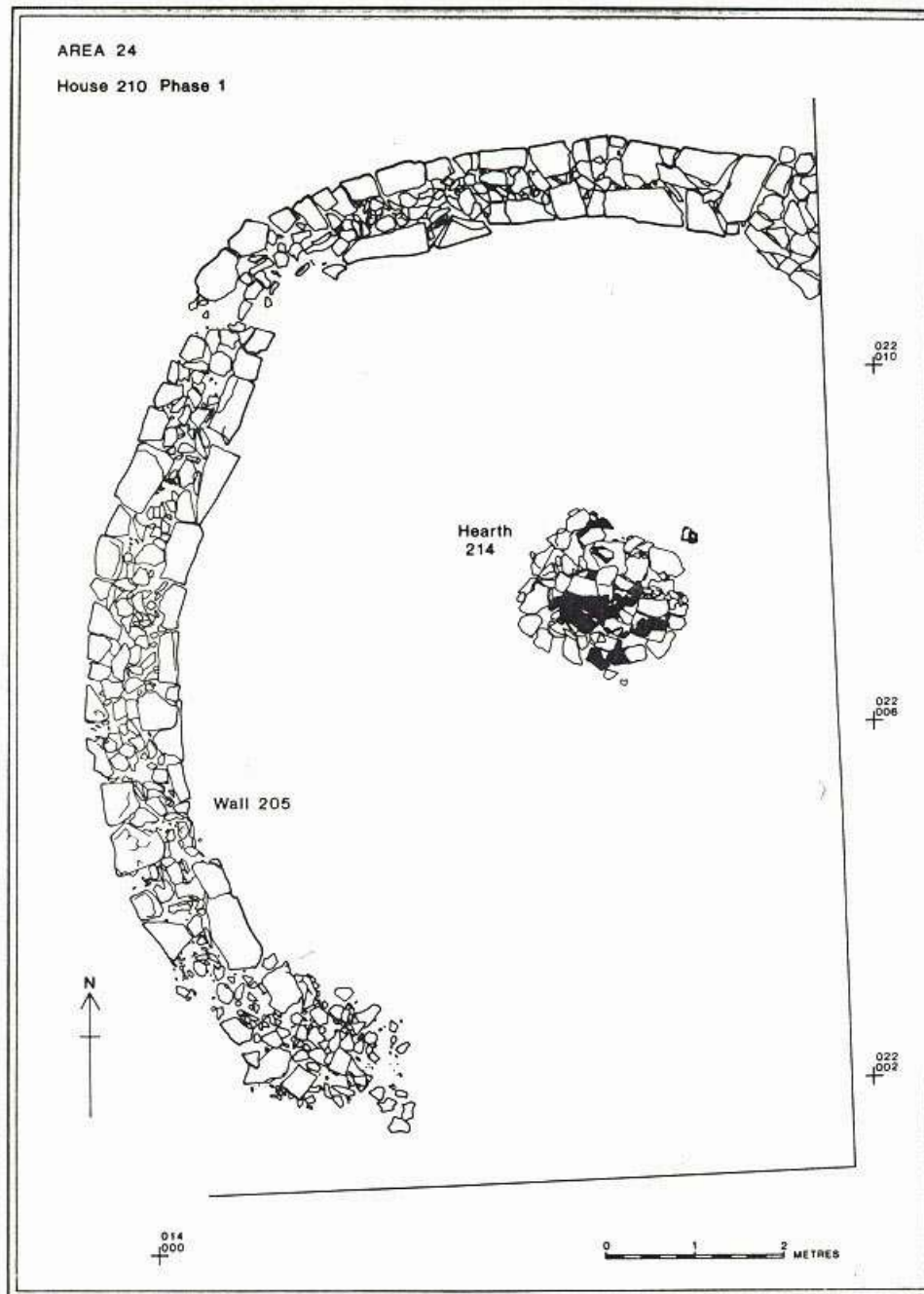


Fig. 2 Stanwick 1981 - 24. Stone round-house in the Tofts.

lengths of ditch examined, and their relationships each to another, suggested an enclosure lying north and east of the excavated area, with a ditch repeatedly recut after each of a series of rapid siltings. One phase of the boundary appears to have been marked by a hedge, vestiges of which survived as a very irregular and pitted surface on the natural clay between two ditch-cuts.

There was considerable evidence of burning both on the clay between various ditch cuts and in the silts of the features themselves. Large quantities of animal bone were recovered, but no pottery at all. Pending further examination, these features remain undated: it is tempting to equate them with the possible period of occupation represented by the ditched enclosures revealed by geophysical survey (see below).

Period 2

This was represented by a deposit, sealing the features of Period I, varying in thickness from c. 5 cm to c. 20 cm. The soil is very black and rich in charcoal and organic matter: it is remarkably abundant in animal bones and also contains an important pottery group. Tegulae and imbrices were found in the layer, as well as masonry rubble, indicative of a Roman-style building of substance and importance in the immediate vicinity. The layer appeared to have been dumped as a single episode, perhaps to level-off the ground over the infilled features of the earlier period, but its ultimate derivation must be as an 'occupation soil' built up over a period of intense settlement activity. There may well be a correlation between this layer and that underlying the bank of Phase I in Wheeler's Site E, marked as 4 on his section drawing: the levels are approximately compatible, as is the general nature of the layer in Site E. Should this indeed be the case, the implications for the chronology of the site are profound, for a considerable and intensive settlement activity associated with Romanised Claudio-Neronian finds would be shown to antedate defences assigned by Wheeler to his initial period of settlement, Phase I.

Period 3 (Fig 2)

Perched upon the surface of the dumped 'occupation soil' were the walls and the collapsed rubble of a rather irregular, but nonetheless well-built, stone round-house, some 10 metres in diameter. It was built entirely without foundations, the walls, which were double-faced with rubble infill, directly over-lying the fairly soft dark soil beneath. The building had a central hearth, similarly built on the surface, of limestone blocks largely oxidised by burning, though this did not yield any charcoal. No trace was recovered either of internal structural posts or of other features, apart from a short drain against the outside face of the wall by the entrance (this is on the downslope side, and the presence of the drain may be indirect evidence for a porch with pitched roof). The doorway which shows some sign of refurbishment, is on the north-east side, in rough agreement with the entrance of the timber house in Wheeler's Site F. The greater mass of the collapsed rubble lay inside the building, and it is calculated that this material would suffice to raise the walls only to c. 50 cm in height; robbing of stone may of course have been large-scale (the trench is adjacent to

the stone park wall). Alternatively the walls were never more than 'dwarf' supports for a timber superstructure - this would be more in accord with the lack of foundations. It seems likely that this native-style house, which post-dates the construction of a Roman-style building, may not have been occupied for long; there is little sign either of rebuilding or of accumulated debris on or scouring of the floor. Comparison with the example excavated by Harding at the nearby site of Holme House, Manfield, is likely to prove instructive (Wilson, 1970). There are traces of at least one other stone building in the area.

THE FINDS

Detailed reports on the finds from the 1981 excavations are filed at the Department of Archaeology of the University of Durham, and may be consulted, pending publication in the final report, by arrangement with Percival Turnbull. Brief summaries are here given of the main categories of material.

FINE POTTERY (FIG. 3)

A specialist report by Martin Millett is available. The pottery group from Area 1981-24 is of considerable interest on account of the very high proportion of early finewares represented. Particularly of importance is a group of South Gaulish samian, of which a high proportion is of decorated forms and which includes a number of rare forms. The group is more comparable with urban assemblages from South Britain than with anything else so far known from the North. The dating is entirely pre-Flavian, the bulk of the material apparently having reached the site in the comparatively short period between 50 and 70 AD: there is little perceptible difference between the pottery from pre- and post-round-house construction contexts.

Other finewares recovered include Gallo-Belgic type butt-beaker, possibly imported, and sherds of amphora and Terra Rubra of Claudian date.

COARSE POTTERY (Fig.4)

The great part of the coarse pottery is of the range of fabrics described by Wheeler and called by him 'Brigantian Ware'. The range of forms is limited and dominated by a group of more-or-less squat, parallel-sided jars. All vessels in this group of fabrics are hand-made and are very irregular: the apparent form of a vessel may change from one joining sherd to another. The sherds are nearly all reduced to a dark grey or black core, often soot-encrusted, though some show signs of secondary burning and local oxidation. The clay source is probably the local boulder-clay. Grits are generally large, and the vesicular nature of much of the pottery bespeaks tempering with a material which has been reduced out: some sherds indeed show signs of having been 'grass-tempered'.

This 'Brigantian' pottery is common on late prehistoric and 'native' Romano-British sites over a wide area of northern Britain, from Traprain Law to Costa Beck. It must at this stage be considered fairly undiagnostic for purposes of dating, but the

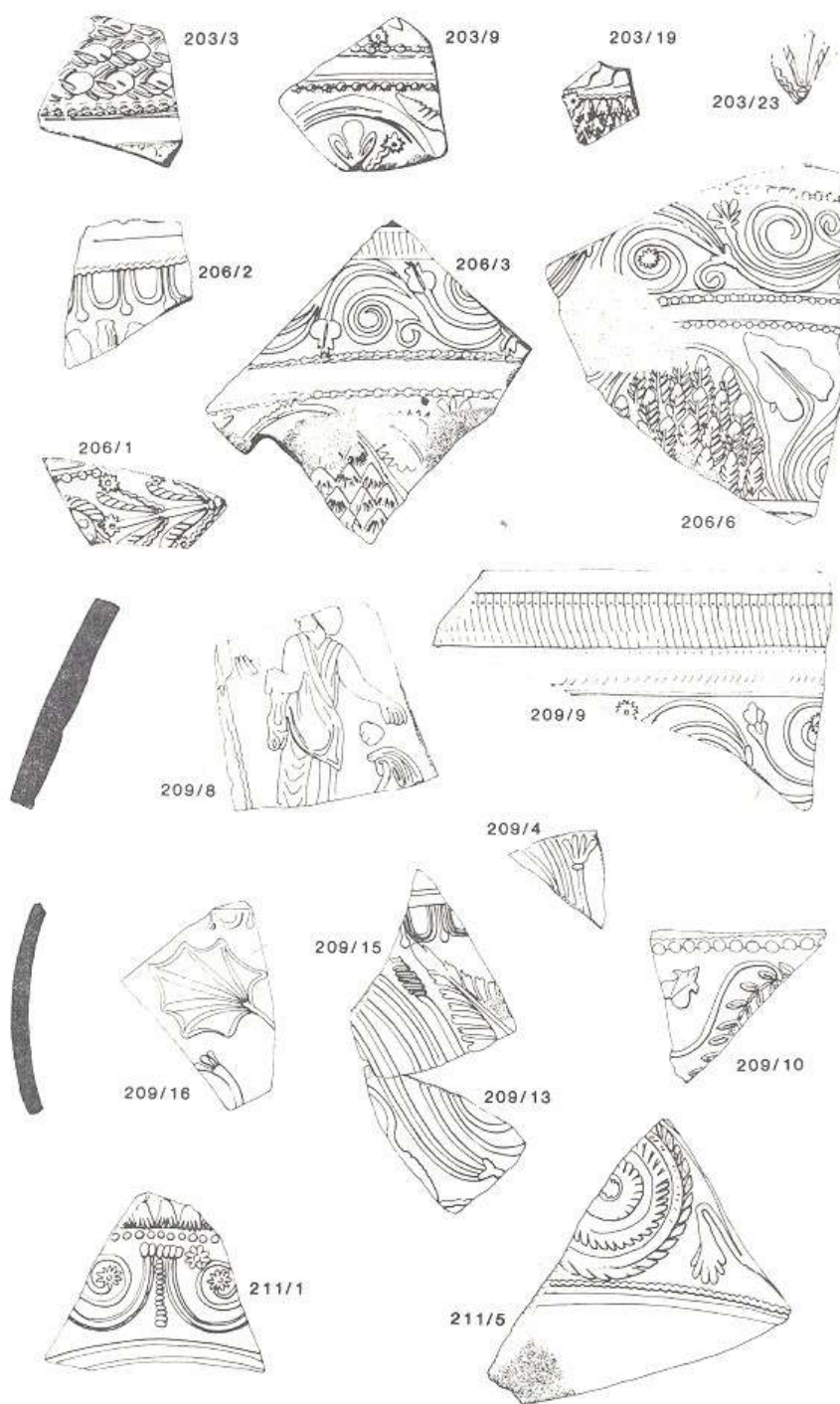


Fig. 3 Stanwick 1981 - 24. Decorated South Gaulish samian.

considerable quantities of material emerging from Stanwick will, it is hoped, eventually provide a chronological framework for this material.

A few sherds of distinctively Romano - British coarseware were recovered, including part of a jar of 'Signal Station' type ware from the topsoil. Other late Roman finds are known from the site, but the nature of the activity at that period is not yet possible to assess.

ROMAN GLASS

The specialist report is by Jennifer Price. Seven fragments of Roman glass were found, from either six or seven vessels. Surviving fragments are very small, but appear to represent two cast and ground vessels, one in monochrome and one in polychrome glass, and four or five blown vessels, all in bluish green glass apart from one in dark blue, perhaps with opaque white marvered blobs. The possible date ranges are considerable, though the polychrome Pillar Moulded Bowl is unlikely to have been made much after 50 A.D: it is likely that the glass, with origins in Italy and South Gaul or the Rhineland, is no later than the late Claudian/early Neronian period.

ANIMAL BONE

The report is by Louisa Gidney. A total of 1,612 bones, mostly in friable condition, were examined, of which 49% were identified to species. The animal economy appears to have been dominated by oxen, presumably used for draught, hides and dairy produce as well as meat. Pigs and ovicaprids were of lesser importance, providing some variety of diet as well as, in the latter case, wool and possibly dairy produce. A small variety of horse was represented, almost entirely by teeth. Tables have been prepared of ageing and other data.

SMALL FINDS

The most important small find is a bronze pin, in near-perfect condition, belonging to the family of "ibex-headed pins". Other items include a piece of bronze possibly from a strap bracelet and a linch-pin of antler of a type paralleled in the square-barrows of Eastern Yorkshire.

DATING AND SIGNIFICANCE

The dating evidence, particularly the well-dated group of Roman finewares, is unambiguously pre-Flavian, and agrees generally with the Hartley and Fitts (1977) redating of Stanwick material: that is to say that the sequence appears to begin in the 40's and end in the 70's A.D., with enough later Roman material to underline the possible significance of the few such finds previously recorded. The earliest phase of activity remains undated and raises the possibility of an early settlement nucleus from which developed the great earthwork phase of Stanwick. Particularly this would be so, should the dump of dark material, with its largely Claudian contents, prove indeed to underlie the Phase I rampart.

This material wealth of the assemblage, and the far-reaching

trading contacts indicated at such an early stage in the process of the Romanisation of Northern Britain, are of great and obvious importance to an understanding of the major social and economic centre which should be expected at Stanwick, contemporary with the earliest military advance and consolidation in the north, and the weight of evidence suggests that the process was beginning much earlier. The presence of Roman building materials is particularly significant (and one should bear in mind also the considerable quantities of roofing-tile found by Wheeler at Site A). Coupled with the evidence from geophysical survey, the 1981 excavations have shown the Tofts to be a major key to the social and economic developments in the North during the later Iron Age and in the period of contact with and absorption by the Roman world.

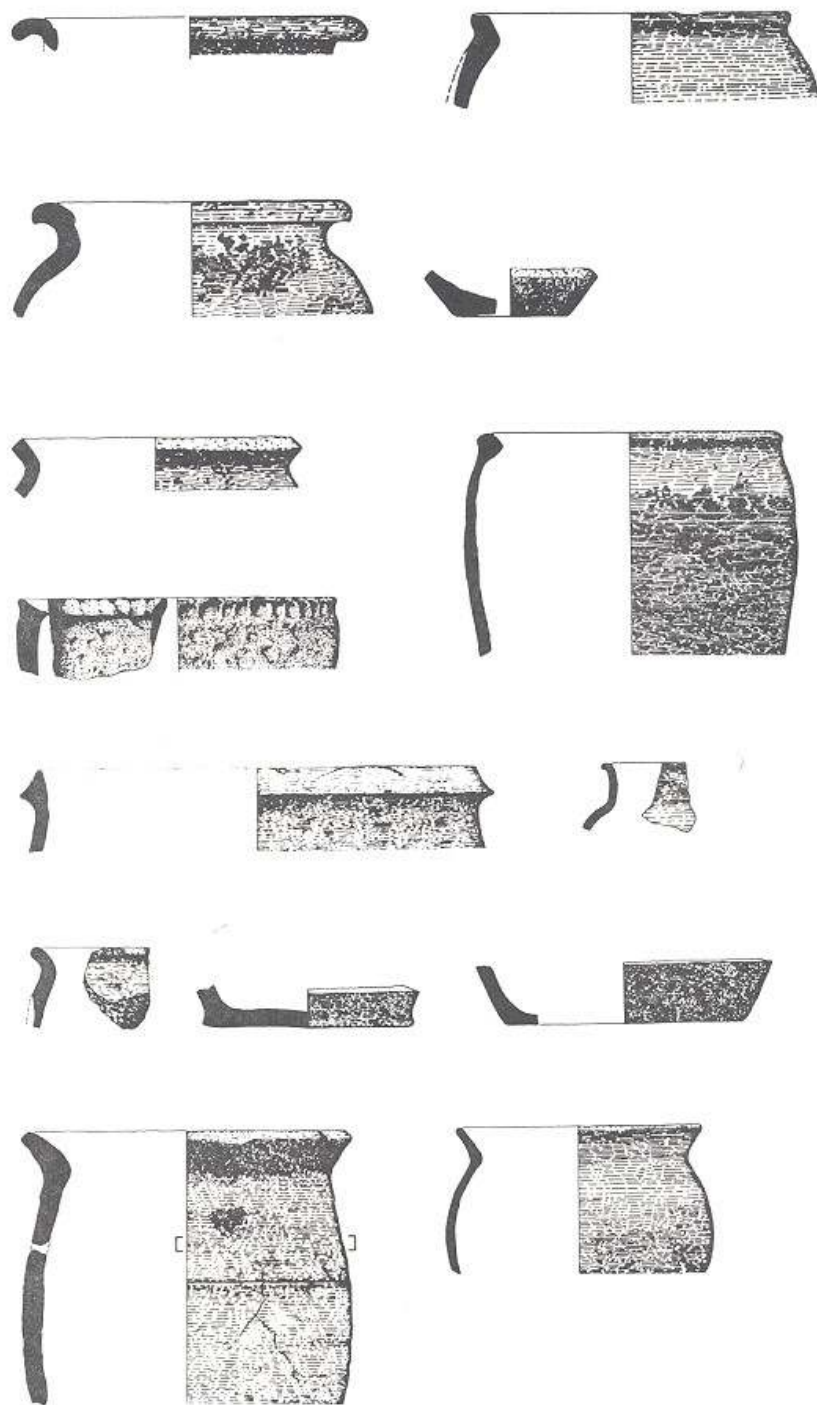


Fig. 4 Stanwick 1981 - 24. Coarse Pottery.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AND FIELDWORK AT STANWICK 1981-3

1. Geophysical Investigation (Fig. 5)

This note is based on detailed reports prepared by A. David (1981) and A. Bartlett (1983), which are filed with the site archive at the University of Durham.

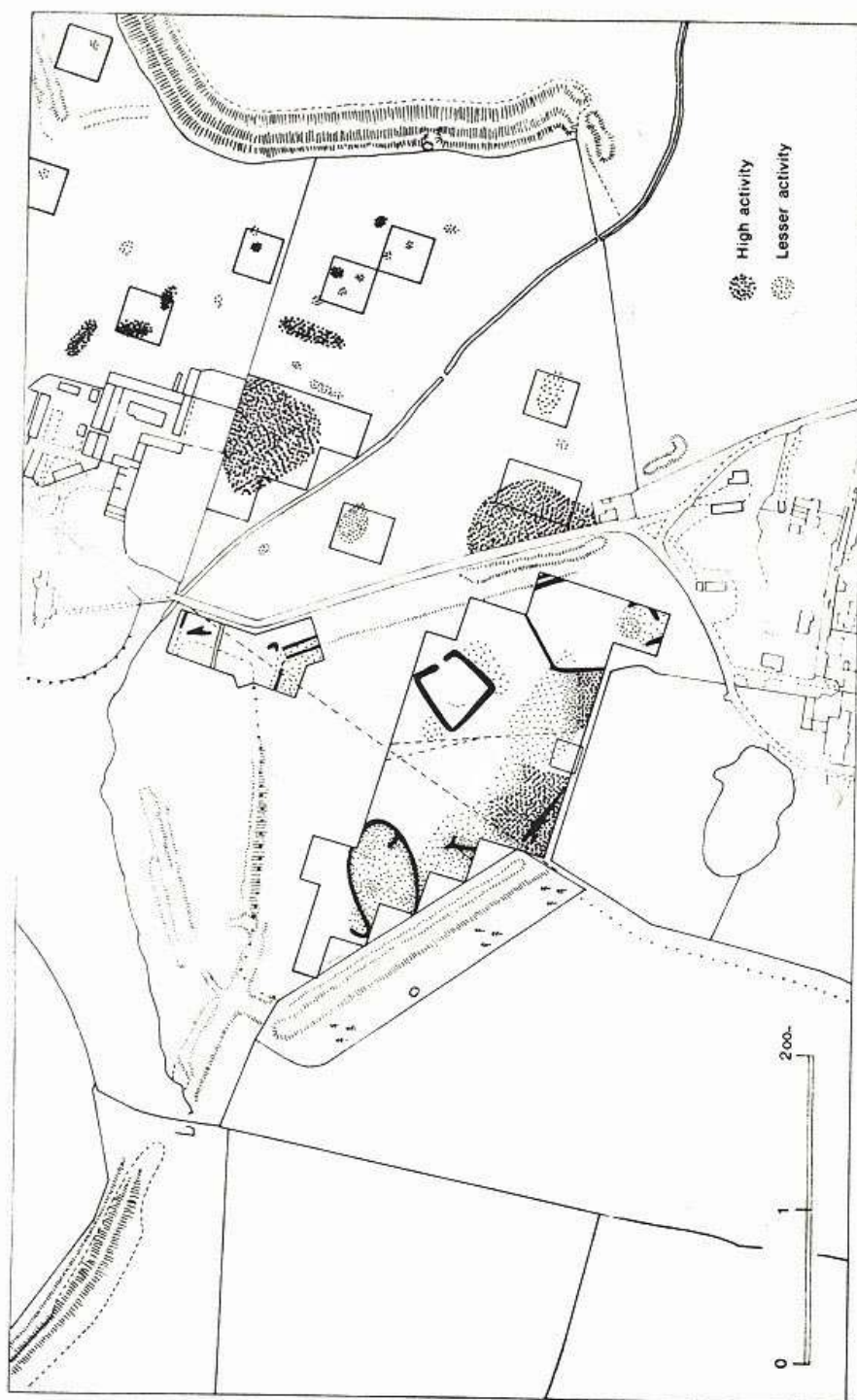
Original fieldwork was conducted by A. David in 1981, with the main aims of assessing the feasibility of magnetic detection on the site and, in doing so, to examine specific areas of the complex for evidence supplementary to that known from excavation and topographic survey. The survey made use of a fluxgate gradiometer with an automatic recording facility.

Work was conducted in the Tofts area, and by the Forcett junction of the Phase II and Phase III earthworks. To illuminate the latter relationship, an area 30 x 120 metres was surveyed alongside and to the south of the Phase III earthwork. Rigg-and-furrow magnetic anomalies lay over the area, but a substantial linear feature aligned with the Phase II earthwork was detected.

Within the Tofts, an initial area was surveyed at the easterly junction of Phase I and II, where a complex pattern of earthworks was further complicated by a substantial magnetic pipe which traversed the area. A series of further linear features was identified, including an apparent double-ditch parallel to, and to the west of, the eastern rampart of Phase I.

Survey was conducted over c. 25,000 sq.m. of Phase I south of the Phase II earthwork, the area within which Iron Age settlement features were detected during Wheeler's excavations. Despite further interference from pipes and from rigg-and-furrow, a complex and varied series of anomalies was recorded. A very high magnetic susceptibility, with correspondingly strong anomalies, suggested intensive settlement activity. At least two enclosures were defined, one oval-shaped with possible huts within it, and one approximately square, with an entrance to the north-east: magnetic response from features within this enclosure was overwhelmed by the enclosure ditches and by background 'noise'. The rest of the area surveyed was scattered with apparent ditched features, both curvilinear and rectilinear: it is presumed that only the least subtle of earth-cut features were visible, and that features represented only by stone were not detected.

The 1983 survey, conducted by A. Bartlett, examined an area within Phase II, north and south of Kirkbridge Farm. The findings show a clear tendency for significant magnetic activity to be concentrated towards the Tofts: areas of activity located in the northern part of the survey area are all weak. Activity appears particularly dense towards the west of the fields south of Kirkbridge. Strong anomalies apparently bounded by ditches are on the raised ground north of Church Lodge: this activity continues between Mary Wild Beck and the farm, and may be bounded by ditches to the east and south. Some areas of the survey were unresponsive, but may contain scattered archaeological features.



(after D o E A M Labs)

STANWICK — main electro-magnetic anomalies in the central area

Fig. 5

Main electro-magnetic anomalies in the Tofts area.

2. Fieldwalking

Approximately 60% of the interior of the Stanwick fortifications is under intensive arable cultivation. A programme of fieldwalking these areas, and some of those adjacent to the outer, Phase III, defences, was initiated by the Department of Archaeology in the autumn of 1982.

To date, only 14 ha. have been line-walked, to the north of the Stanwick - Forcett road inside the Phase II defences. Although this field lies behind Wheeler's Site A and is known to contain the cropmarks of at least one rectangular enclosure, the results were negative with respect to the problems of late Iron Age or Roman occupation; all the material recovered appears to be of Mediaeval or later date.

Earthworks : Forcett Parish , North Yorkshire .

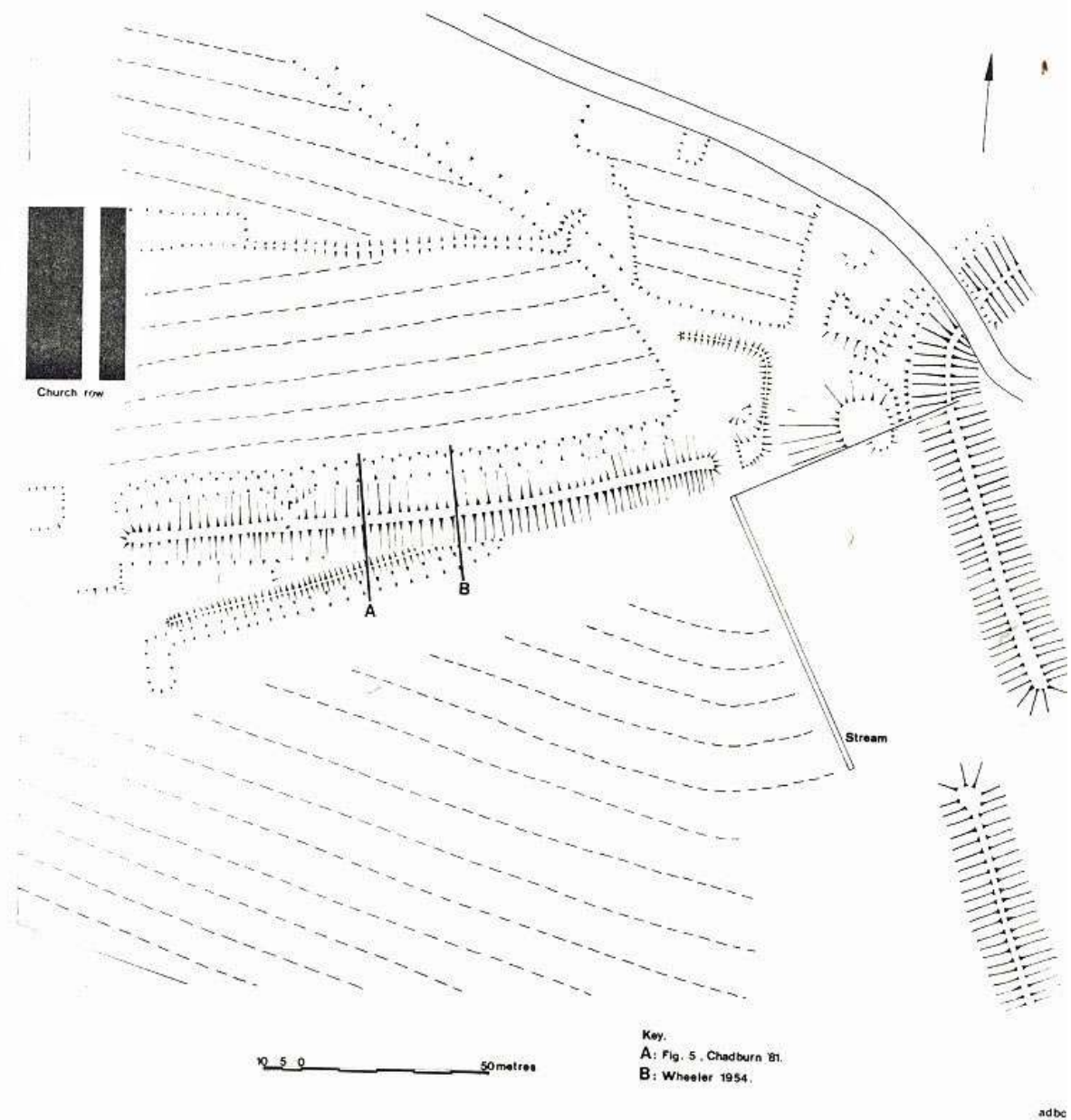


Fig. 6 Earthworks at the Phase II/III junction, Forcett.

THE FORCETT EARTHWORKS:

A REASSESSMENT

By Amanda Chadburn

1. INTRODUCTION

The parish of Forcett-cum-Carlin, North Yorkshire, contains numerous earthworks, including the north-western parts of the Stanwick Fortifications. However, aerial photographs and fieldwork have indicated a number of previously unrecorded, extant earthworks at Forcett, which appeared to relate to the Iron Age defences, and were therefore of obvious import in any interpretation of Stanwick as a whole.

In addition, there appeared to be some ambiguity as to the relationship between the Phase II and Phase III earthworks (Wheeler, 1954) which form a junction in Forcett. Wheeler described the Phase III earthworks as having been built at a later date onto the Phase II earthworks as a response to Roman attack. However, no excavation was carried out at the crucial junction in order to test this hypothesis. Dobson (1970) suggested that the structural sequence at Forcett could be reversed, and that the Phase III earthworks might in fact precede those designated by Wheeler as his second phase.

It was under these circumstances that the author undertook a detailed survey of a selected part of Forcett parish in 1981, both to record the present state of the earthworks and in the hope of illuminating the problems outlined above (Chadburn, 1982).

2. THE SURVEYED EARTHWORKS (Fig. 6)

The survey took place in the field to the east of Forcett church, and to the west of the major north-west entrance of the Stanwick earthworks (Wheeler, 1954, Site B). The earthworks may be divided into two categories, Prehistoric and Mediaeval (or post-Prehistoric), which owing to the lack of secure dating evidence from excavation are necessarily tentative.

a) Prehistoric The largest surveyed earthworks in the field are known to be Iron Age (Wheeler, 1954; Turnbull, this volume). They include the large earthwork which runs approximately east-west across the area surveyed, and the main 'staggered' earthworks forming the Phase II north-west entrance of Stanwick. The latter are now somewhat denuded, but the former are still approximately 3 m high.

The east-west earthwork is of especial interest because of the small bank and ditch, which joins it on the southern side, and the hook-like earthwork which joins it at the eastern end. These unexcavated earthworks are far less substantial than the main Iron Age ramparts, and would appear, from both aerial reconnaissance and fieldwork, to underlie the large Iron Age defences.

The hook-like feature, approximately 0.5 m high, consists of a small bank and ditch which is separated from the main earthwork by a gap cut by a former stream. However, while this feature

might be an integral part of the larger earthwork it also resembles in height and construction the small bank-and-ditch to the south. As both 'hook' and this latter earthwork are on exactly the same alignment, it is possible that they are contemporaneous and part of a single construction.

The small bank-and-ditch to the south might at first appear to be a mediaeval headland, but this is not the case: there is a strip of uncultivated land between it and the rigg and furrow, and the ditch lies to the south of the bank, ie. on the same side as the rigg and furrow. The low earthwork appears, indeed, to underlie the Iron Age defences. Wheeler's section of Site D (1954) is useful at this point for comparative purposes. It was dug at a point where the small bank and ditch disappear, and the section shows what Wheeler called a "marking-out-bank" and ditch. This feature has similar dimensions to the surveyed small bank and ditch, and it would seem logical to assume that they are part of the same feature. It would therefore appear that there are earlier prehistoric earthworks underlying the Iron Age defensive bank at this point, and it seems likely that the 'hook' earthwork represents a remnant of the same constructional system.

The main east-west earthwork of Wheeler's Phase III itself varies in width and height, but averages some 3 m high, with a now slight ditch to the north, some 3 m wide (Fig. 7). In section (Wheeler's Site D), it is almost identical to the Phase II earthwork at Site A.

The earthwork, approximately 2.0 m - 2.5 m high, forming the North-West entrance (Wheeler's Site B), is superficially similar to the Phase III defence, and is also known to be prehistoric. However, these Phase II earthworks do differ markedly, in the height and width of the rampart, from the Site A (Phase II) earthwork.

Between the 'hook' and the Phase II earthworks there is a dump of earth, previously interpreted as the slighted remains of the eastern end of Phase III. It slopes gently towards the hook earthwork and ends sharply at the Phase II ditch, which appears to cut it, and is therefore, presumably, later.

b) Post - Prehistoric and Mediaeval As has been implied, the pre-existing earthworks were important in shaping the subsequent development of the landscape, particularly with regard to cultivation. The rigg and furrow in the northern field, for example, is parallel to the Phase III earthwork and, elsewhere, to the 'hook', which would therefore seem already to have been in existence. The former stream may also date to mediaeval times since the rigg and furrow respects its course. Other modifications which may date to this period include that to be seen at the western end of Phase III. Here, the earthwork appears to have been levelled, truncating the defences, and the earth thus produced to have been pushed across the ditch to make a rough causeway, possibly indicating the line of a mediaeval road. Rigg and furrow to the south also respects both Phase III and the smaller earthwork discussed above, leaving a gap of uncultivated land between the two.

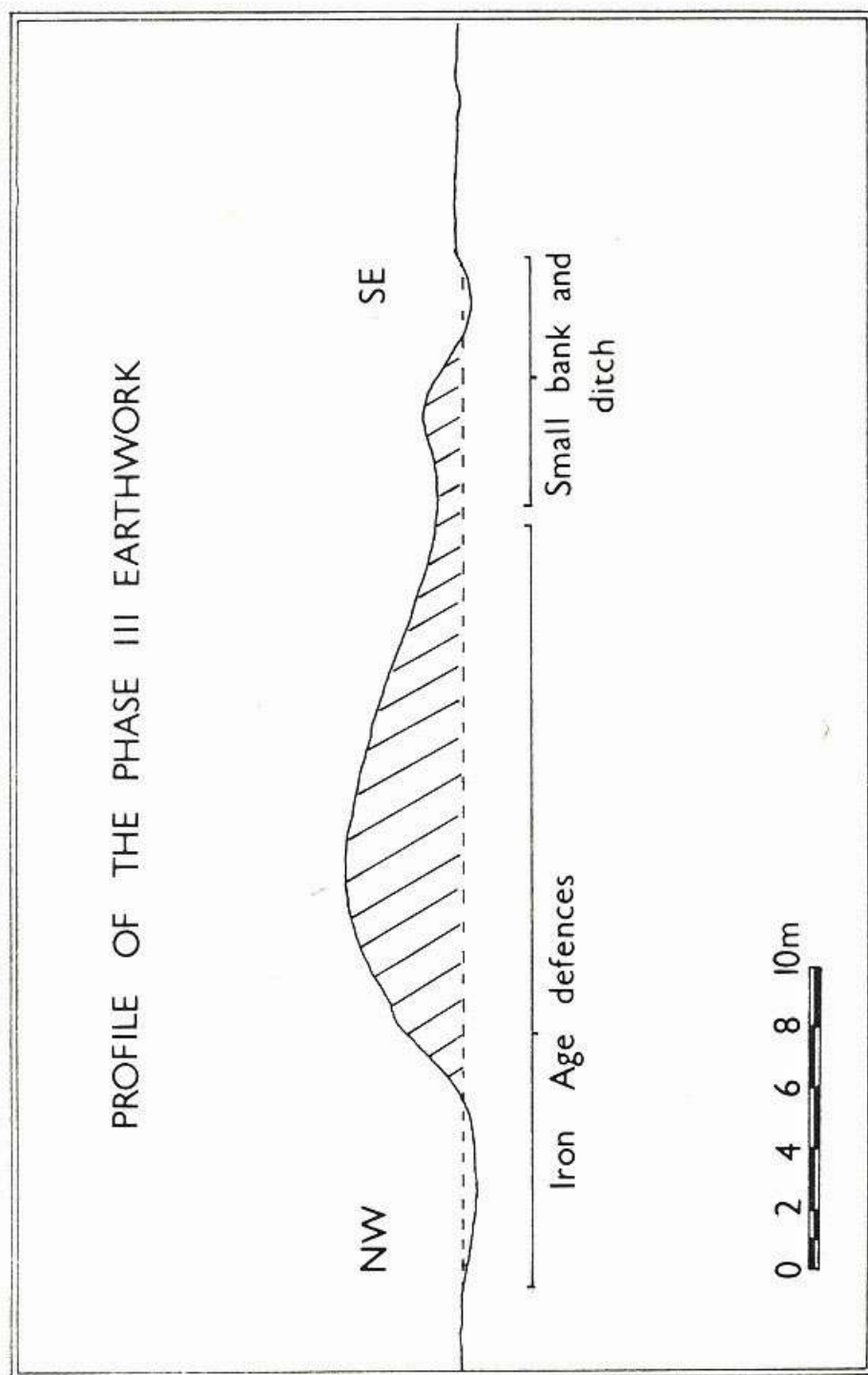


Fig. 7

Profile of the Phase III earthwork at Forcett.

3. INTERPRETATION OF THE SURVEYED EARTHWORKS

From the above fieldwork, it is possible to essay a tentative phasing of earthworks at Forcett, as follows.

- a) There was a pre-defence phase, consisting at Forcett of the small bank and ditch, the 'hook', and the 'marking out' bank of Site D. Wheeler's 'marking-out' bank at Site A was probably part of this same system. A bank and ditch of similar proportions was excavated in 1983 on the north face of Henah Hill: the possible significance of this pre-defence system is discussed in connection with the results of that excavation (this volume).
- b) The Iron Age defences, now extant, which run south-west to north-east were built over the remains of the earlier period. This may have occurred in more than one place (Wheeler's Sites A and D). While these earthworks take a similar alignment to those of the earlier period, the divergence is sufficient for the latter to be regarded as distinct and not simply as a 'marking-out' phase.
- c) A final set of Iron Age defences was built, cutting into the former defences near to the original entrance at the 'hook'. This could account for the dump of earth, which is probably a slighted remnant of the preceding earthwork. The North-West entrance with its staggered earthworks was presumably built so that any former entrance could be utilized and defended.
- d) Mediaeval rigg and furrow, and other post - prehistoric earthworks were constructed, but the Iron Age defences were usually respected and remained fairly intact.

It thus seems likely that Wheeler phased the earthworks incorrectly at Forcett, and that the Phase II/III sequence may be reversed, validating Dobson's hypothesis. This conclusion obviously has implications for the phasing of the site as a whole: these are discussed in this volume and elsewhere (Chadburn, 1982; forthcoming; Turnbull, 1983).

EXCAVATIONS AT STANWICK, 1983

INTERIM SUMMARY

The 1983 season of excavations was devoted to work on Henah Hill, the relationship of which to the main earthwork and settlement complex has hitherto remained in doubt: the hill, the most emphatic topographical feature at Stanwick, is excluded from the circuit of Wheeler's (1954) Phase II earthwork, and the line of Phase III is here far from plain. The idea of a possibly early focus on Henah Hill has been suggested (Haselgrove, 1982), and one aim of the 1983 campaign was to test this hypothesis: an examination was also made of traces of an earthwork on the northern side of the hill (Fig. 8).

Area 1983.1 A trench was excavated on the northern side of Henah Hill, to investigate a low earthwork on the northern slope of the hill, visible as a pronounced break in the lower slope such as to create a terraced effect. There was the surface indication of an infilled ditch on its northern side. This apparent earthwork was in a position such as to suggest that it might continue the line of an earthwork running round the base of the Hill, underlying and dictating the course of the Phase II earthwork: excavation was designed to establish its nature and position within the overall system of earthworks at Stanwick.

Turf was removed from an area 20 m x 8 m, running with the slope over the putative earthwork or lynchet. In the lowest part of the trench was exposed an area of the yellow-brown natural boulder clay, to the north of the putative ditch, which proved to be disturbed by the roots of nearby trees. This area was cleaned several times and examined for features, but proved to be barren apart from modern disturbances. As a final check, the surface of weathered clay was removed down to its solid clay case.

In the upper part of the trench, south of the putative ditch, removal of turf exposed a soil, similar to the natural boulder clay, but clearly redeposited: the matrix was considerably sandier, less pebbly and a richer brown in colour than that of the true natural. Cut into the surface was a series of six parallel linear features, following the contours and clearly representing the various phases of a long-lived boundary. Three gullies (two of which had evidence for post-settings) came to clear butt-ends within the excavated area: the butt-ends correspond exactly and must indicate the persistence of an entrance. At one point the post-hole for a possible gate-post was recorded. Two further gullies continued without interruption across the excavated area, as did a zone of disturbed material which proved on excavation to consist of a band of irregular hollows a few centimetres deep, probably indication of a former hedge line. One of the root holes produced a sherd of Mediaeval pottery. The hedge was presumably established when the rigg-and-furrow on the north slope of Henah Hill was abandoned; it is on a slight rise and immediately inside it is a broad depression or furrow, apparently the turning circle for the field system, and cutting two of the gullies. Material from the fence lines was scarce, but a few small and abraded sherds were recovered, including sherds of an orange, oxidised fabric which has affinities with local Romano-British or early Mediaeval wares.

It was evident that the material into which the boundaries were cut was the product of hill-wash or soil creep, and that it derived from the slopes of Henah Hill at a time when the topsoil was disturbed and exposed through agricultural activity. A section was cut through it to establish its depth and nature and to locate features buried beneath it, particularly at the lower break in slope at which point it was clear that some physical obstacle had prevented the further downhill movement of eroded material (Fig. 9).

The total depth of hill-wash material proved to average some 1.5 metres. The soil was quite uniform throughout, suggesting continuous deposition throughout a more-or-less long agricultural episode. The scarce pottery finds recovered reinforced the interpretation of this body of derived material as a lynchet: small sherds of Iron Age or Romano-British coarsewares were heavily weathered and eroded, reflecting their exposure on the surface. Their overall quantity was insufficient for the calculation, from their vertical distribution, of the duration of the formation period of the lynchet; there is nothing from the body of the lynchet that need be later than the 2nd C. AD. A possible hollow underlying the lynchet may be the remains of a slight ditch, or may be related to an early agricultural operation.

At the scarp of the lynchet was discovered an earthen bank, c. 30 cms in height and overlain by lynchet deposits. A ditch c. 50 cms wide, immediately to its north, may be associated. The scale of the bank belongs clearly to a different order of magnitude to the main Iron Age earthworks on the west side of Henah Hill: its form is however compatible with a field-boundary, an interpretation justified by its relationship to the lynchet. Part of a possible plough-soil was sealed by the bank. A zone above and to the rear of the bank, defined as a stone-free layer, may represent a second bank or an enlargement of the original bank. Cut into the front face of this was a gully; filled with a loose and very stoney material, this had the appearance of a robber-trench for a narrow stonewall, though whether this was for a revetment of the enlarged bank or one of the series of later boundaries at the very edge of the lynchet bank, is not clear. It yielded a sherd of the orange fabric.

Excavation north of the lynchet, where a probable ditch had been indicated on the surface and after topsoil-stripping, revealed a complex series of cuts. Ten distinct phases of ditch-digging could be discerned, mostly of recent date. The second-earliest cut was for the insertion of a deep-set drystone culvert of late or post-mediaeval type. There was no indication of the date of the earliest cut: although mostly removed by subsequent phases and appearing to butt-end within the excavated area it had been of defensive proportions (c. 1.5 m deep). On balance, however, its identification as a defensive work may be dismissed; lacking as we do clear evidence of a bank of a size to suggest a rampart. In the light of the repeated recent cutting of the ditch for purposes of drainage the greater likelihood is that the earliest cut was made for the same purpose; its termination in the excavated section does, however, reinforce the suggestion of a long-lived entrance at this point.

Area 1983.2 A trial area excavation was carried out near the summit of Henah Hill, to investigate a circular feature visible on aerial photographs and which appears on MacLauchlan's (1849) plan as a circular covert or copse. This was of uncertain relationship to the rigg-and-furrow which covers the hillside. A further aim was to prospect for any other traces of settlement or other activity on the hill. A total of 150 sq.m. was examined. Removal of turf revealed a thin topsoil or ploughsoil overlying a boulder-clay surface deeply scored by a recent episode of ploughing which had removed and redeposited the top 15 cms of clay. Erosion has clearly been severe, although rigg-and-furrow, surviving as shallow relief over the whole of the hill, has to some extent protected the natural surface, which survived at a higher level under the riggs. Careful clearing failed however to reveal any clear complex of features. A slight recut gully, aligned east-west, had as its upper fill a charcoal-rich deposit suggestive of a redeposited 'occupation soil': the earlier phase of the gully contained a mediaeval sherd, and apparently predated the rigg-and-furrow at this point. To the east, an marked increase in the density of stones is best interpreted as a ploughed-out cobble spread and appears to be associated with three very shallow cobble filled pits. There is no dating evidence for the activity represented, although small quantities of very abraded Romano-British and mediaeval pottery were found in turf and ploughsoil levels over the site. A setting of four large stone slabs proved to be fast in the natural clay and their survival in situ to be due to their preservation under the headland between two of the mediaeval fields on Henah Hill.

A six-metre arc of the known circular feature was examined. A shallow circular gully had been filled and capped with a rough bank of stone (resembling field-clearance material), the gully later being recut. There was some evidence for a body of redeposited clay within the circular feature. A modern date was indicated: the circle was apparently built as a boundary to the circular covert or copse depicted by MacLauchlan, and this was laid out originally as a parkland feature rather than being a secondary use for an existing earthwork.

Discussion

The bank and small ditch at the beginning of the lynchet sequence is of especial interest, in that it conforms well to minor features recorded by Wheeler at different points sealed by the major defensive earthworks (Wheeler, 1954; Chadburn, this volume) and interpreted by him as "marking-out banks", and raises the possibility that what we are in fact recovering are vestiges of earlier landscape divisions, perhaps of fields associated with the settlement or settlements from which the developed oppidum of Stanwick grew, but possibly much earlier in date. The idea of superimposition of the ramparts on the boundaries of an area already divided and managed on a regional scale, would go far towards the provision of a social and economic context for the emergence of the focal centre which the site clearly became, while the line and rectilinearity of the landscape divisions may begin to provide an explanation for the eventual form of the site.

There are hints that the small bank and ditch may have influenced the line of the Phase II rampart round the western flank of Henah

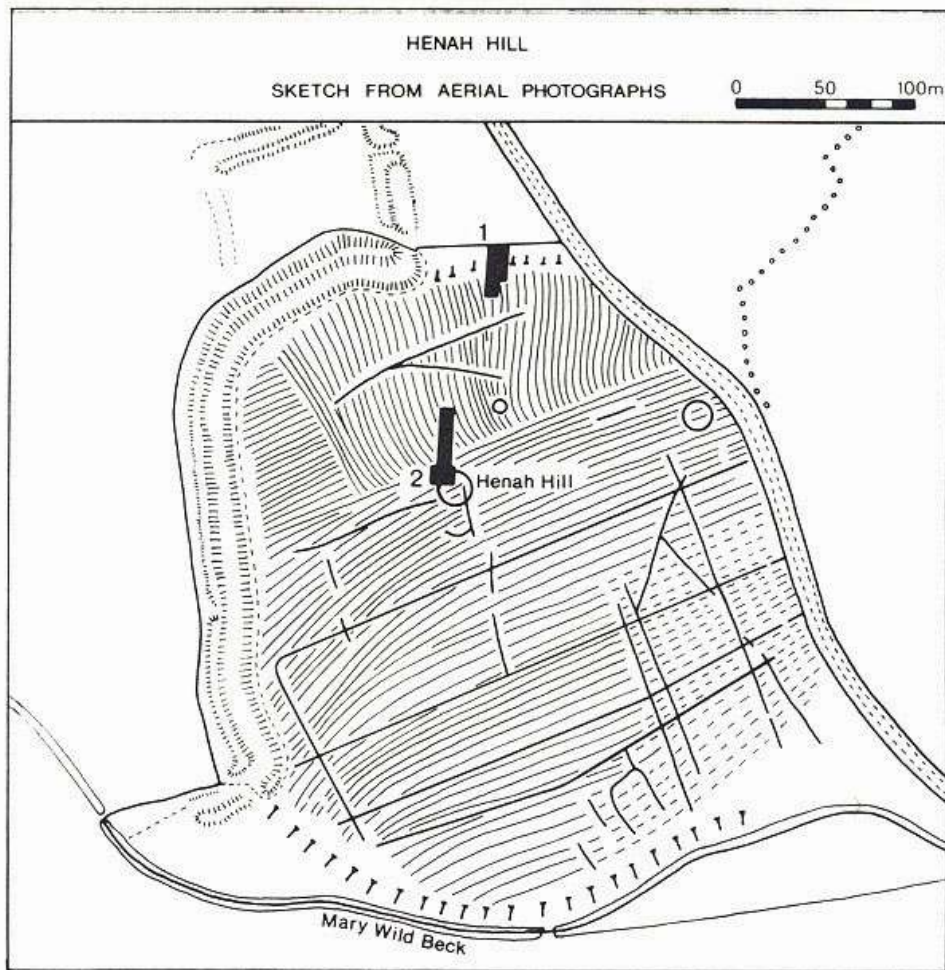


Fig. 8 Henah Hill showing evidence of former cultivation and location of trenches.

Hill, both in the relationship of the lynchet to the rampart and in the section of Wheeler's Site C. Of particular interest is the fact that the section seems to show a slight stone-covered bank on top of the old ground surface, comparable in its dimensions to the enlargement of the first bank at the base of the lynchet. The section also appears to show some evidence that this bank had a stone revetment on its outer face. If this is in fact the case, we thus have evidence which points to the enclosure of Henah Hill before the main period of rampart building at Stanwick. There is no reason to suppose that this bank, by its location or its proportions, was intended to be defensive in nature; rather, the development of the lynchet directly over it on the Hill may point to it as an early field boundary, perhaps faced with stone collected off the fields.

The case for Henah Hill as an early focus of settlement is thus substantially weakened by the results of the 1983 excavation; indeed its exposed position, and the fact that all the finds so far recovered from the Hill may be accounted for as having been spread in manuring operations, would mitigate against there ever having been a settlement on at least the northern portion of the hill. Instead, it seems we have a land-use alternating from pastoral to arable which can be charted from the pre-Roman to the present day, although the absolute dating and duration of these episodes must remain uncertain. Clearly the lynchet itself represents a long period of apparently continuous cultivation which may well have its origin before the erection of the Phase II rampart. Unfortunately Wheeler's Site C section (1954) does not extend far enough southwards to explore the anatomy of any possible lynchet formation at the edge of the defensive ditch. However, a profile carried out in 1983 confirms the existence of a lynchet of which the insubstantial nature - although it is too large to be the headland of the mediaeval field - is presumably due to erosion down into the ditch. If the lynchets are related, this cultivation of the hillslope clearly continued after the construction of the Phase II rampart, ie. in the Roman period.

On the other hand, there is nothing in the body of the lynchet that demands a date later than the second century AD, nor in the fills of the gullies dug into the top of the lynchet and apparently indicative of a long standstill phase, which would prevent them also being of Romano-British date (depending on the dating of the orange fabric). Further work is clearly needed to resolve the question of the date and duration of this phase of arable activity. After the standstill phase, the duration of which is also uncertain, renewed arable activity is indicated by the establishment of rigg-and-furrow running north-south up the hill-slope, with the characteristic 'reversed - S' form usually associated with mediaeval ploughing. Surviving as low relief, this has been revealed all over the hill by low-level oblique vertical air-photography (Fig. 8 above). It is generally aligned east-west. This is presumably of the same date as the north field though the gauge is somewhat broader, the length of the system considerably longer, and the plan form conditioned by minor inconsistencies of slope.

Additionally to the pattern of rigg-and-furrow may be seen a complex of linear divisions, clear particularly on the southern part of the hill, with some further vestiges on the northern face. Three circular features may be remarked, of which one, at

least, is now known to be of recent date. The sequential relationships of the linear elements to the rigg-and-furrow are not clear - some of the features appear to be the result of relatively modern drainage operations - but at some points the rectilinear system which they constitute (Fig. 8 above) appears to be the earlier and conforms well to the rectilinear field-systems now well-known from many areas, not least from northern England (Fowler, 1983, pp. 142-4), and generally of late prehistoric to early Romano-British date. There is certainly no evidence for post-mediaeval division of this type at Stanwick: it is reasonable to suppose that we have some of the fields within which the late-prehistoric or Roman ploughing or Henah Hill took place.

The 1983 season on Henah Hill has indicated very clearly the problems of chronology and interpretation posed by earthwork sections and small-scale excavation. Nevertheless both sites, and the lynchet section in particular, have furnished information which when fully evaluated promises to be of considerable value to our understanding of how the landscape of lowland North Yorkshire was exploited through successive periods.

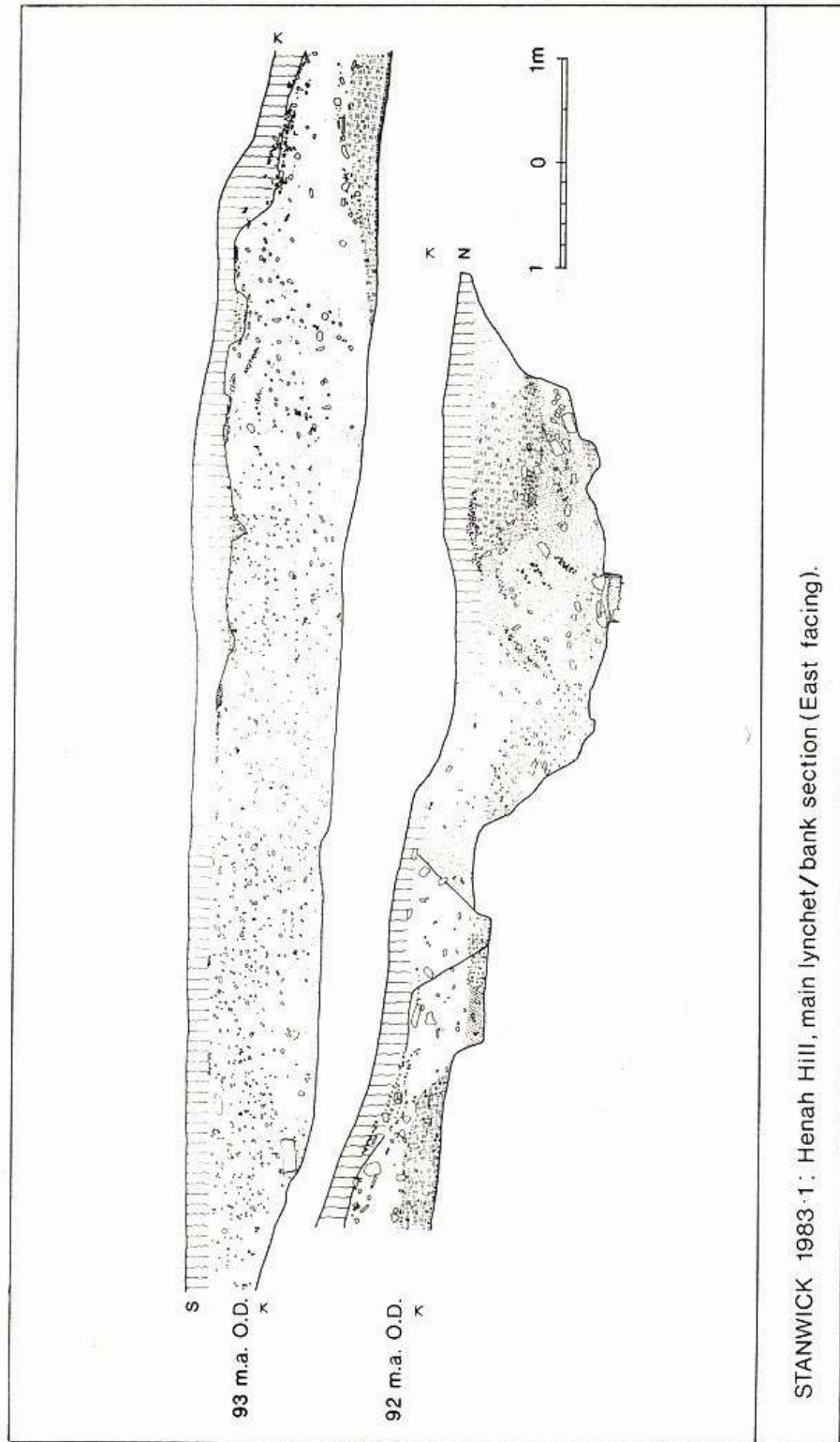


Fig. 9 Stanwick 1983 - 1. Main section across bank and lynchet.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROGRAMME FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The Stanwick Fortifications escaped excavation until 1951-2, when they were investigated by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in response to the then Office of Work's invitation to him to select the site which in his opinion had the most to offer the progress of archaeological research in Britain. It was a challenge to which Wheeler responded with his usual style and vigour, and his conclusions, as to the nature and context of the site, seemed unassailable both when they first appeared in 1954, and for a generation afterwards (cf. Cunliffe, 1978). Since 1981, however, a programme of reevaluation instigated by one of the authors, working under the auspices of North Yorkshire County Council, has overturned several aspects of Wheeler's interpretation and the different sequence and context for the development of the site which seems to be indicated (Turnbull, 1983) would seem to require a fresh programme of research, involving fieldwork, geophysical survey and limited excavations. A Stanwick Research Committee, representing both local and national interests, is being formed to oversee the project which is based in the Department of Archaeology, University of Durham.

Including the work undertaken in 1983, at least a five-year programme is envisaged for the present work at Stanwick. The need for excavation, some of which it is anticipated might be conducted under a rescue remit, goes beyond the need to elaborate on the evidence regarding the internal organisation of the site and details of structure inherited from Wheeler; controlled artefactual and biological sampling is needed to take advantage of the science-based advances in the subject which have taken place over the last thirty years. A fieldwalking survey has been initiated and will be combined with aerial survey. The geophysical and survey work of the Ancient Monuments Laboratory and the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments will be augmented by the Department of Archaeology, which will also be initiating an ancillary programme of documentary and cartographic survey. The specific aims and methods to be adapted will be outlined after a brief resume of the shift in our interpretation of Stanwick and in our perception of its context which has been made possible by the work of 1981-3.

Phase A : Pre - Fortification Landscape (Fig. 10)

Wheeler's Sites A, C and D, fieldwork at Forcett and the recent excavations on Henah Hill combine in suggesting that, fossilised under the main Iron Age ramparts at Stanwick, we may have elements of the landscape boundaries and divisions which existed prior to the development of the fortified sites. The existence of these divisions may in turn begin to provide an explanation for the eventual form of the site and also for such enigmas as Wheeler's Phase IV earthworks and the nearby Scot's Dyke. It is possible that these slight boundaries represent the territorial divisions or even fields associated with the settlement or settlements from which the entire complex developed. In this respect, it is interesting that the rectilinear enclosure known as a cropmark in the field north of the modern Stanwick-Forcett road appears to be associated with a "droveway" feature which makes for the same point as that at which the Site B entrance now stands; in any case, the association of such enclosures with

linear features is common in the Iron Age of the north-east (Haselgrove, 1982).

Equally, however, these slight banks and ditches may represent a far earlier system of territorial organisation, comparable to those systems so well attested in the uplands of Northern England and elsewhere, eg. on the North Yorkshire Moors (Spratt, 1982), often with an origin in the second millennium BC. In this case, as at Fengate in Cambridgeshire (Pryor, 1978), their preservation is an accident of subsequent land-use. Either way, the importance of the Stanwick Fortifications is that the ramparts seal such an area of old land surface in a "lowland" context as to allow an investigation of such questions and, through the recovery of palynological evidence, the associated land-use. Their divergence from the Iron Age ramparts, where it appears likely, can be investigated relatively simply by geophysical means.

As well as these features, a number of rectilinear and curvilinear enclosures have recently been recorded in the vicinity of Stanwick, including three within the area enclosed by the defences. Although there is no dating evidence, some of them at least are likely to antedate the construction of the main defensive system, and indeed, they need not be contemporary with one another. Similarly both Wheeler's Site F and the 1981 excavations suggest that in addition to the substantial enclosures already mentioned, Tofts Field contains a complex series of ditches, pits and structures, likely to represent activity of some duration, some of which post-dated the construction of the main defences, but much of which is likely to predate it. A possible interpretation is that these remains represent the evolution of one or more enclosures into an open and unenclosed, or complex-ditched, settlement like Catcote or Thorpe Thewles in Cleveland (Heslop, 1983). The relationship (if any) between this settlement area and the stone-revetted bank round the north and western faces of Henah Hill is also a matter for debate; there is no evidence that the hill was ever a focus of settlement; indeed, the 1983 excavations raise the possibility that Henah Hill was already under intensive cultivation by the time the main Stanwick fortifications were constructed.

Phase B : The Construction Of the Main Defences (Fig. 10).

There is no reason at present to reject a mid first century AD date for the main stone-revetted defences, with a small subsidiary enclosure in the northern part of the site, and there are elements of the rampart sequence which could be even later.

The exact sequence and significance of these defences remains uncertain. Both Turnbull (1983) and Dobson (1970) have questioned Wheeler's hypothesis that the larger fortifications (his Phase III) were an extension of the smaller, northern enclosure (his Phase II) at the time of the Roman advance into the North. The main doubts hinge on the historical particularities of Wheeler's argument and the importance he ascribes to what he interpreted as an unfinished southern entrance to the outer enclosure when it could be argued that there was never intended to be an entrance there. Turnbull (forthcoming) prefers to see the distinction between the inner and outer fortified enclosures as functional rather than

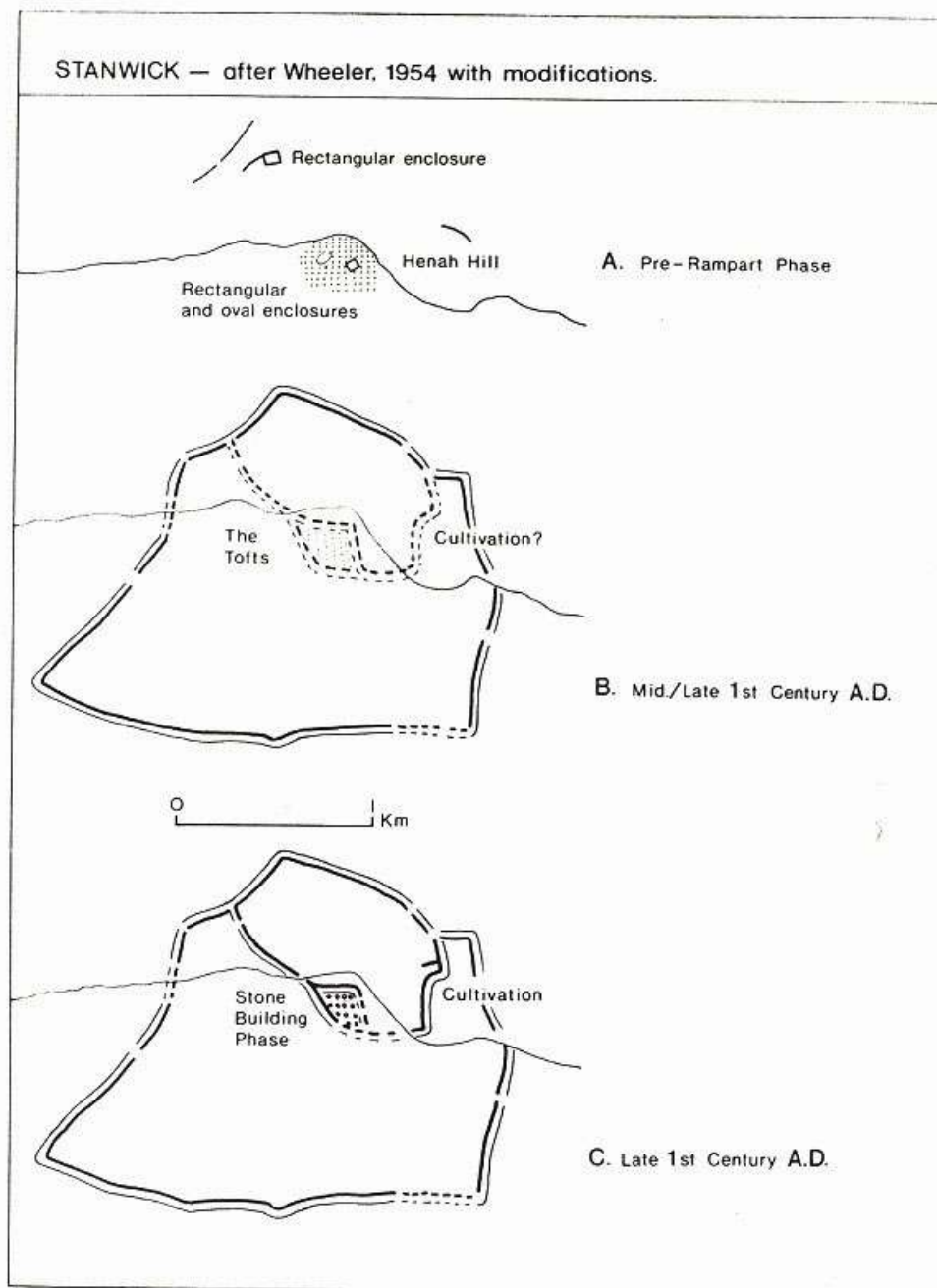


Fig. 10 Stanwick : Development, after Wheeler, with modification.

chronological; the former being the main settlement focus and the latter providing either the fields and pasture in a manner comparable with the territorial dyke-complexes of the South-East (Cunliffe, 1978), or defining an area appropriate to external exchange transactions.

Dobson (1970), however, suggests that the smaller enclosure represents either the addition of a subsidiary enclosure or the contraction of the defended area. Chadburn's recent fieldwork has lent weight to the first of Dobson's hypotheses by demonstrating that at the junction of the outer and inner enclosure at Forcett, the southern defence is not only an addition but differs from the defences on either side of the junction in having a possible counterscarp bank. Nevertheless, such questions are of minor importance in comparison with the major ones concerned with the function and status of the site as a whole, as well as the factors causing it to be defended on such a scale.

Recent work has also cast some doubt on the line proposed by Wheeler for the southern part of the northern enclosure.

Ground inspection, as well as the magnetometer survey, indicates that the line of this inner enclosure may well be different from that proposed by Wheeler; the western defences turn south to enclose both sides of the Mary Wild Beck, which pace Wheeler cannot have been a defensive obstacle comparable to a bank and ditch.

Sealing earlier features in Tofts Field at this period is an organic-rich deposit containing animal bones and hand made pottery as well as quantities of imported Roman fine-wares, eg. Pre-Flavian Tera Sigillata, Butt Beakers, flagons and amphorae. The deposit also contains Romanised construction materials - tegulae and imbrices. Wheeler's Site A produced similar material and together this evidence suggests the construction of Romanised structures at Stanwick before the military advance into the area. If as now appears possible, the Tofts occupation was originally outside the northern enclosure defences, the presence of Romanised structures in this phase, on analogy with continental sites, could well denote a residential quarter for traders and other outsiders to the community, and would be of particular importance. This would also imply that the focus of the earlier, open settlement is likely to have been north of the Mary Wild Beck.

Phase C : Late First Century AD Onwards (Fig. 10C)

The Final phase of activity in Tofts Field is represented by the construction of a circular stone building in the indigenous tradition (which seals the earlier occupation deposits) and possibly the erection of an additional bank and ditch around the area, the Duchess's Walk rampart. This seals a thin black deposit very similar to that excavated in 1981. A number of other possible modifications could be either roughly contemporary or of a much later date. The swift abandonment of the site as a population centre of any magnitude seems to be contemporary with the Roman annexation of the North, with the nearby vici of

Catterick and Piercebridge its likely successors as centres of population. While Hartley and Fitts (1977) have suggested that the presence of 'Pompeian red' wares at Stanwick implies the presence of an early fort in the vicinity, no more substantial evidence has been forthcoming. Paradoxically, the earlier date they propose for some of these finewares as well as the early Roman material found in the 1981 excavations suggest that their importation into the area does not fit into a military context but rather into a native, economic one.

On the north and west slopes of Henah Hill, there was clearly intensive arable cultivation in the Roman period, but the duration of the activity, followed as it was by a series of boundaries which may also have their origin in the Roman period, must for the moment remain somewhat uncertain. Late Roman finds are known from elsewhere on the site, including a buckle or buckles with military affinities from the churchyard, perhaps reflecting the presence of the later fort on the Tees crossing at Piercebridge, while finds of pre-Conquest sculpture in the church suggest a centre of importance in the late Saxon period.

The importance of the Stanwick complex is thus many sided. At the same time as providing an opportunity to study the process of settlement growth or nucleation leading to the major centre of late Iron Age date indicated by the defences, it may also afford an opportunity to examine traces of earlier landscape organisation in what is, relatively speaking, a 'lowland' setting. A key site for the understanding of the later Iron Age in the Tees Basin and the Vale of York, it must also be regarded as the site in northern England which is likely to yield fresh information on the nature of economic and political or diplomatic ties between the region and the Roman south in the mid first century AD, virtually guaranteeing a highly significant, though unusual, assemblage. Finally, it may afford an opportunity to research both Roman and post-Roman settlement and agricultural land use at a scale which may be expected to shed light on these vexed and shadowy questions.

Future Research Aims and Methods

Over 60% of the interior of the Stanwick fortification and a high proportion of the land immediately outside the defences is currently under intensive arable cultivation, and it is clear that a major long-term priority is that all available areas should be walked, with the particular aims of identifying areas of settlement nucleation and possibly further components of the pre-rampart settlement patterns. This work shall be complemented by a programme of aerial reconnaissance, providing funding is forthcoming.

Proposals have been made to the Ancient Monuments laboratory that they should continue the work initiated in 1981, with the following aims:

- (a) to establish the limits of the settlement in Tofts field.
- (b) to establish or refute the continuity of the defences from Tofts field to Henah Hill, and to examine the possible enclosures on the south slope of Henah Hill.
- (c) to examine the pasture to the north of the Mary Wild Beck for traces of settlement.

- (d) where practicable in the cultivated areas in the north of the defended area of Stanwick, to locate, and in conjunction with the surface collection to characterise, traces of occupation. This would include the area behind Site A.

It is also hoped that resistivity survey by Durham University in the north-west part of the site in Forcett parish will be able to add to our knowledge of the line of landscape divisions in the pre-Rampart phase.

In 1984, it is planned that excavation will concentrate on the Tofts field, with the twin aims of improving knowledge of the sequence, phasing and nature of occupation there, and of relating this activity to the defensive sequence of the Stanwick Fortifications. The area excavated in 1981 will be reopened to complete the examination of the early features underlying the black occupation soil, and extended to permit questions to be answered as to the stratigraphic relationship of this horizon with the Duchess's Walk rampart and the location of the demolished Romanised structure which preceded the circular building. This will also allow the examination of features relating to the curvilinear enclosure revealed by the 1981 geophysical survey. The nature and date of the substantial rectilinear enclosure is another priority for research. The feature of defensive proportions in the north-east corner of the field, which may indicate a different line for the fortifications, will also be examined; its location might suggest that waterlogged material may be found in the lower fill of any ditch. Completion of work in this part of the site is likely to take a further 1 - 2 seasons.

A subsidiary aim of the excavations must be, as has already been pointed out, to maximise the recovery of artefactual and ecofactual remains for comparative purposes, using appropriate collection techniques. The hand-made coarse reduced fabrics have been accepted for inclusion in an SERC-funded Thermoluminescence dating programme being undertaken by the Archaeological Dating Laboratory at the University of Durham, while a carbonised seed assemblage obtained from features and contexts sampled according to a random design is urgently required to set against that from the recently excavated settlement at Thorpe Thewles (Heslop, 1983) and other sites in the region. To confirm trends at variance with those reported in Wheeler 1954, and to furnish further comparative material, the augmentation of the faunal assemblage recovered in 1981 is also clearly desirable.

Excavation for drainage purposes in the vicinity of the north-west entrance of the inner enclosure, Wheeler's Site B, where the sword and scabbard and other waterlogged material were recovered, has resulted in major alterations to its drainage characteristics, which may result in the surviving deposits drying out completely. In view of the tremendous potential of these waterlogged deposits for modern environmental analysis, the examination of the remainder of this entrance complex should also be a priority for excavation, perhaps in a rescue context. In the longer term, excavation may also be desirable on the surviving entrance, which is thought to be original, in Forcett Park, and to examine the status of the Phase IV earthwork identified by Wheeler and its relationship, if any, to earlier landscape divisions. The rectilinear cropmark in the field

north of the modern road between Forcett and Stanwick, and the area behind Site A where occupation traces are to be expected, may require excavation, while the characterisation of any settlement on the slopes to the north of the Mary Wild Beck would also be of the utmost importance. Follow-up work to validate geophysical surveys there and on the south slopes of Henah Hill should also be considered.

The sheer size of the complex precludes its detailed examination at more than a few selected points in the landscape, and it is clear that the long-term success of the project will depend on the establishment of a sampling programme, which goes beyond the use of surrogate aerial and geophysical survey methods, and allows the drawing of inferences of known confidence limits at a scale appropriate to the unit of study. Here, systematic field walking and collection according to a probabilistic design employing topsoil sampling in areas of pasture and elsewhere as necessary, may prove the only practical approach, affording us some idea of the changing impact of human population on the landscape from the end of the post-glacial period to the present day as measured through the density of artefact deposition and other variables such as phosphate concentration which may be linked to settlement activity. Only then are we likely to be able to place these "steinvegges" in their true perspective.

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